

# Group seeks noise abatement along Loop 303

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A group out of Sun City West wants to muffle the sounds of diesel truck engines and motorcycles roaring along Loop 303, and has started a campaign to seek some kind of noise abatement.

The community's Roads, Traffic and Public Safety Committee is circulating a petition requesting the sound buffer, which it will soon present to the Maricopa Association of Governments. The group is hosting a series of meetings with county leaders to seek support, and is also in the midst of an e-mail and letter writing campaign.

The Arizona Department of Transportation has taken notice, and over the past few days has had an employee measuring the decibel count resonating from the thoroughfare. The average count ranged from 52 to 58 decibels on various days during the measurement period.

ADOT tolerates an average of up to 64 decibels before it tries to mitigate the problem through noise abatement procedures, said spokeswoman Diane D'Angelo. She said a buffer is not on the organization's radar, and that it likely would not consider abatement procedures until at least 2011.

Maricopa County Department of Transportation spokeswoman Roberta Crowe said a vacuum cleaner running about 10 feet away and a lawn mower running about 100 feet away, both produce about 70 decibels of noise. She said a quiet rural setting at night produces about 25 decibels, and that a quiet urban setting in the daytime produces about 52 decibels.

Yet for some residents of the Northwest Valley, the 303's noise already is intolerable. Residents have complained of waking up at night because of increased traffic and watching their property values decline due to the noise, said Sun City West resident Chuck Ullman.

D'Angelo said the future of an any abatement process lies entirely with MAG and its Regional Transportation Plan. Ullman hopes all affected Northwest Valley residents will participate in the campaign.

A meeting will be held May 10 at the Sun City West lecture hall at R.H. Johnson and Meeker boulevards. Ullman may be contacted through the Property Owners and Residents Association at (623) 584-4288.